

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSCE-00 NSC-10 INR-09 CIAE-00

NSAE-00 MBFR-02 ACDA-10 IO-03 PRS-01 GAC-01 PM-03

DODE-00 EB-03 L-02 RSR-01 RSC-01 STR-01 SAJ-01 /073 W
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R 111138 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4414

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 05292

LIMDIS/ NOFORN

VIENNA FOR MBFR DEL; HELSINKI FOR MPT DEL

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, UR

SUBJECT: FRG- USSR RELATIONS: THE BREZHNEV VISIT-- A
PREVIEW

1. SUMMARY: THE EXPECTED MID- MAY VISIT TO THE FRG BY
BREZHNEV IS VIEWED BY SENIOR OFFICIALS IN BONN AS AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR THE FRG TO OBTAIN SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS
IN THE VEXING PROBLEMS INVOLVING BERLIN AND INNER- GERMAN
RELATIONS. THESE OFFICIALS DO NOT CONSIDER THAT THE
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FRG, FOR ITS PART, CAN MAKE MANY CONCESSIONS TO THE USSR SINCE THE SOVIET DESIDERATA SEEM TO LIE IN AREAS (E. G. CSCE AND EXPANDED TRADE/ CREDIT ARRANGEMENTS) IN WHICH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT' S MANEUVERING ROOM IS LIMITED. NONETHELESS, IN ORDER TO BRING LIMITED MOVEMENT ON THE SOVIET SIDE, THE FRG LEADERSHIP MAY END UP HAVING TO MAKE SOME RELATIVELY POSITIVE NOISES ON CERTAIN CSCE ISSUES AND TRADE MATTERS. IN DOING SO, HOWEVER, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE CARE NOT TO GO TOO FAR; THESE NOISES COULD BE MISINTERPRETED BY SOME WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES ALREADY SUSPICIOUS OF THE CLOSE BILATERAL FRG- USSR RELATIONSHIP AND ITS POTENTIALLY HARMFUL EFFECT ON ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY. THEY COULD ALSO BE MISUNDERSTOOD BY LARGE SEGMENTS OF THE GERMAN PUBLIC, NOW APPARENTLY CONCERNED OVER THE DELETERIOUS IMPACT THAT OSTPOLITIK MAY BE HAVING ON THE FRG' S RELATIONS WITH THE US AND THE WEST. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH THERE IS STILL NO FIXED DATE FOR BREZHNEV' S VISIT TO BONN, WEST GERMAN OFFICIALS ARE PROCEEDING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT HE WILL BE IN THE FRG FOR SEVERAL DAYS IN MID- MAY. ON THE BASIS OF TALKS WE HAVE HAD RECENTLY WITH SEVERAL OF THESE OFFICIALS, IT SEEMS THAT WEST GERMAN EXPECTATIONS FOR THE VISIT ARE FAIRLY HIGH. THEY HOPE FOR SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT ON SOME OF THE VEXING PROBLEMS CONCERNING WEST BERLIN' S FOREIGN REPRESENTATION BY THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, A MATTER ON WHICH THE USSR HAS BEEN NOTABLY HARD LINE SINCE THE SIGNATURE OF THE BERLIN AGREEMENT LAST JUNE. THEY ALSO HOPE, VERY CLEARLY, TO BE ABLE TO CONVINCE BREZHNEV TO PRESS THE GDR TO TAKE MORE REASONABLE POSITIONS ON A SERIES OF OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS IN INNER- GERMAN RELATIONS (E. G., CIVIL AIR NEGOTIATIONS, FAMILY REUNIFICATION, ETC.), ARGUING THAT GDR INTRANSIGENCE VIS- A- VIS THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC MAY THREATEN TO SPOIL THE CURRENT MOVEMENT TOWARD DETENTE IN EUROPE AND, HENCE, THE SUCCESS OF BREZHNEV' S WESTERN POLICY. ADDITIONALLY, BRANDT SEEMS TO WANT TO USE THE VISIT TO DEMONSTRATE THE CONTINUED ATTRACTIVENESS AND VALUE OF HIS OSTPOLITIK BY SHOWING THE INCREASING NORMALIZATION OF THE SOVIET- WEST GERMAN RELATIONSHIP, AND ALSO, CONCOMITANTLY, TO TRY TO PLAY THE SORT OF EAST- WEST BRIDGEBUILDING ROLE THAT HAS SO ATTRACTED HIM

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OVER THE YEARS. THIS LATTER ROLE MAY SEEM PARTICULARLY

TIMELY FOR HIM, SINCE HE WILL HAVE RETURNED FROM THE US ONLY A WEEK OR SO BEFORE THE SOVIET LEADER'S ARRIVAL IN BONN.

3. ON SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS, WE BELIEVE THE WEST GERMANS MAY BE DISAPPOINTED. ON BERLIN, FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS NO SIGN THAT THE SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO BE LESS RESTRICTIVE IN THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE FOREIGN REPRESENTATION ASPECT OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT THAN THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST. DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN TAKING PLACE IN BONN PRACTICALLY ON A CONTINUING BASIS IN RECENT WEEKS BETWEEN SOVIET AMBASSADOR FALIN AND STATE SECRETARY FRANK IN ORDER TO TRY TO SETTLE THE

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DODE-00 EB-03 L-02 STR-01 RSC-01 RSR-01 SAJ-01 /073 W
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AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
USMISSION BERLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 05292

LIMDIS/ NOFORN

OUTSTANDING BERLIN ISSUES. WITHOUT THEIR RESOLUTION, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE BILATERAL SCIENTIFIC- TECHNICAL AND CULTURAL AGREEMENTS TO BE SIGNED DURING BREZHNEV'S VISIT, AS THE FRG HOPES WILL HAPPEN. THE FRG FONOFF NOW SEEMS TO BE REACHING THE CONCLUSION THAT THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP IS REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT ITS RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION OF PARTS OF THE BERLIN AGREEMENT AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME, FONOFF REPS ARE LESS THAN SANGUINE ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR ANY EARLY SATISFACTION OF FRG DEMANDS THROUGH FOCUSING HIGH- LEVEL SOVIET POLITICAL ATTENTION ON THE ENTIRE PROBLEM AREA. THEY ALSO SEEM TO REALIZE THAT EVEN IF THE SEVERAL BERLIN PROBLEMS ARE SOLVED THIS

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TIME AROUND, THERE WILL BE FURTHER PROBLEMS AND THUS MORE TUGGING AND HAULING REQUIRED WITH THE SOVIETS IN THE FUTURE. THIS IS NOT AN ATTRACTIVE PROSPECT FOR THE GERMANS.

4. REGARDING THE FRG- GDR RELATIONSHIP AND THE POSSIBLE SOVIET EFFECT THEREON, THE PROSPECTS MAY BE SOMEWHAT MORE PROMISING, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE LIMITS TO THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SOVIETS WILL ACT TO KEEP THE GDR ON A LINE THAT SUITS FRG PURPOSES. RECENT INDICATIONS FROM SOVIET SOURCES IN BONN ARE THAT THE SOVIETS RESENT THE GDR EFFORTS TO ROIL THE POLITICAL WATERS WITH THE FRG. A SOVIET DIPLOMAT TOLD ONE OF OUR CONTACTS RECENTLY THAT THE GDR MEASURES AGAINST FOREIGN JOURNALISTS (BERLIN 441) WERE TIMED AND DESIGNED TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES IN EAST- WEST RELATIONS TO NO GOOD PURPOSE: THE SOVIET SAID ALL SOCIALIST STATES HAD THESE SORTS OF REGULATIONS BUT DID NOT FEEL THE NEED TO PUBLISH THEM. WE UNDERSTAND THE SOVIETS PITCHED IN, THEREFORE, AND URGED THE GDR TO PLAY THE JOURNALIST ISSUE IN MUCH LOWER KEY, AND THE MATTER SEEMS NOW TO BE PROCEEDING WITH FEWER DIFFICULTIES THAN BEFORE. SIMILARLY, OUR SOURCE HAS TOLD US THAT THE SOVIETS WERE IRRITATED OVER RECENT INDICATIONS THAT THE GDR INTENDED TO DELAY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRG- GDR GENERAL RELATIONS TREATY AND SO BROUGHT ABOUT ISSUANCE OF THE STATEMENT IN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND (BERLIN 560) THAT ATTEMPTED TO LAY THAT ISSUE TO REST BY REASSURING THE FRG OF EAST GERMANY'S INTENTIONS. THIS EVIDENCE, CIRCUMSTANTIAL THOUGH IT IS, SUGGESTS THE SOVIETS MAY BE PREPARED TO APPLY PRESSURE ON THE GDR IN THOSE AREAS WHERE THE USSR FEELS ITS INTERESTS ARE THREATENED BY THE GDR'S CREATING DIFFICULTIES WITH THE

WEST GENERALLY OR WITH THE FRG IN PARTICULAR.

5. THE NATURAL QUESTION IS, OF COURSE, WHAT IS IN ALL OF THIS FOR BREZHNEV: WHAT CAN HE GET OUT OF THE FRG IN RETURN FOR MOVEMENT ON BERLIN AND/ OR GDR QUESTIONS. OUR CONTACTS IN THE FONOFF ARE SOMEWHAT AMBIVALENT IN TRYING TO RESPOND TO THIS QUERY. THEY FEEL, PROBABLY CORRECTLY, THAT BREZHNEV WILL USE THE VISIT TO ATTEMPT TO BOLSTER FURTHER HIS IMAGE AS A WORLD STATESMAN AND TO PLAY UP, FOR DOMESTIC SOVIET AS WELL AS FOREIGN
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CONSUMPTION, THE CONTINUING SUCCESS OF HIS WESTPOLITIK. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE FONOFF EXPECTS BREZHNEV TO PRESS FOR A SUMMIT MEETING AT THE END OF CSCE IN HELSINKI IN ORDER TO PUT THE HIGHEST- LEVEL SEAL OF APPROVAL ON THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE. IT IS NOT ENVISAGED BY OFFICIALS IN BONN THAT BREZHNEV WILL GET INTO ANY OF THE PURELY TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF CSCE (OR MBFR, FOR THAT MATTER), ALTHOUGH IT IS FELT THAT HE WILL MAKE SOME GENERAL REMARKS ABOUT THE FRG' S NOT CREATING SUCH SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES ON CERTAIN QUESTIONS AS TO DELAY PROGRESS IN HELSINKI. THE FONOFF CONSIDERS THAT BREZHNEV' S STYLE IS SUCH THAT HE WILL, UNLESS EXPLICITLY COUNTERED, CONCLUDE FROM THIS HIGH- LEVEL, ABOVE THE BATTLE, APPROACH THAT THE FRG WILL TAKE REASONABLE POSITIONS ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS INVIOABILITY OF BORDERS/ NONUSE OF FORCE, FAMILY REUNIFICATION, MARRIAGES, AND FREER MOVEMENT GENERALLY. THE FONOFF DOES NOT EXCLUDE, HOWEVER, THAT FONMIN GROMYKO MAY (IF HE ACCOMPANIES BREZHNEV TO BONN, SOMETHING THAT IS STILL UNDECIDED) RAISE THESE OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS MORE PRECISELY IN TALKS WITH HIS FRG COUNTERPART, SCHEEL. OUR SOURCES ALSO EXPECT BREZHNEV TO PUSH BRANDT HARD ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION QUESTIONS, SUCH AS EXPANDING TRADE TIES AND JOINT PRODUCTION VENTURES, AND THE GRANTING OF LONG- TERM, LOW- INTEREST CREDITS.

6. IN SPEAKING FRANKLY WITH OUR FONOFF CONTACTS, WE HAVE ASKED WHETHER THERE IS MUCH THE FRG CAN OFFER, EITHER IN THE CSCE CONTEXT OR IN THE FIELD OF TRADE AND

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NSAE-00 MBFR-02 ACDA-10 IO-03 PRS-01 GAC-01 PM-03

DODE-00 EB-03 L-02 STR-01 RSR-01 RSC-01 SAJ-01 /073 W
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R 111138 Z APR 73
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 BONN 05292

LIMDIS/ NOFORN

CREDITS. THIS IS WHERE THE AMBIVALENCE COMES IN. MOST
FEEL THAT THE FRG ROOM FOR MANEUVER IN HELSINKI IS
LIMITED. THEY ARE AWARE OF THE THINKING IN THE
CHANCELLERY POSSIBLY FAVORING AN FRG DEAL WITH THE
SOVIETS ON CSCE- RELATED QUESTIONS IN EXCHANGE FOR
OBTAINING SOVIET LEVERAGE ON THE GDR ON INNER- GERMAN
MATTERS. BUT OUR SOURCES BELIEVE THAT, GIVEN THE FACT
THAT THE FRG IS ONLY ONE OF MANY ON THE WESTERN SIDE AT
HELSINKI, ITS ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME OF THE
CSCE IS EXTREMELY LIMITED. EVEN A GERMAN BOW TOWARD
THE POSSIBLE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR A FINAL CSCE SUMMIT
IS NOT A DECISION THE CHANCELLOR CAN TAKE ALONE. A
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SOMEWHAT SIMILAR SITUATION EXISTS ON THE TRADE/ CREDITS SIDE. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS JUST NOT IN A POSITION TO DO VERY MUCH, SHORT OF WHAT IT IS NOW TRYING TO DO, I. E. TO PROMOTE TRADE AND JOINT PRODUCTION EFFORTS BY INDIVIDUAL FRG FIRMS. BUT THE SUCCESS OR LACK THEREOF IN THIS AREA DEPENDS MUCH LESS ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THAN ON THE FIRMS' AIMS AND, NOT LEAST, ON THE SOVIET HANDLING OF THESE FRG CONCERNS' INITIATIVES.

7. IN SUM, THE WEST GERMANS ARE APPARENTLY HOPING FOR SOME SIGNIFICANT GAINS FROM THE BREZHNEV VISIT BUT DO NOT SEE THAT THEY CAN OFFER MUCH IN RETURN. THIS MAY NOT BE A PARTICULARLY REALISTIC APPROACH; IT SUGGESTS EITHER THAT THE FRG' S DESIDERATA WILL NOT BE MET, AT LEAST NOT FULLY, OR THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MAY HAVE TO MAKE MORE POSITIVE NOISES ON THE CSCE ISSUES, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE FINAL SUMMIT, AND ON TRADE/ CREDIT QUESTIONS THAN THE FONOFF PRESENTLY CONSIDERS POSSIBLE. OUR PRESENT ESTIMATE IS THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE VISIT MAY FALL SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE TWO ALTERNATIVES BUT THAT THE FRG WILL BE DISAPPOINTED IN THE LACK OF COMPLETE SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO MOVE ON BERLIN AND THE GDR AND, IN ORDER TO OBTAIN SOME MOVEMENT, MAY MAKE SOME RELATIVELY POSITIVE STATEMENTS ON CSCE AND TRADE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION QUESTIONS. WE DO NOT EXPECT THE FRG TO MAKE MEANINGFUL CONCESSIONS ON CREDITS, HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH SOME COSMETIC MOVE IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE. FINALLY, BOTH THE FRG AND SOVIET LEADERS WILL PROBABLY EMERGE WITH THEIR IMAGES ENHANCED AS PROGRESSIVE, DETENTE- MINDED STATESMEN, PLAYING A MAJOR ROLE ON THE WORLD SCENE.

8. BUT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL IN CONSIDERING THE NATURE OR TONE OF THE NOISES IT MAY FEEL COMPELLED TO MAKE TO GET SOME MOVEMENT OUT OF THE SOVIETS. SEVERAL WEST EUROPEAN DIPLOMATS HAVE TOLD US IN RECENT WEEKS OF THEIR CAPITALS' CONCERN WITH THE CLOSED BILATERAL NATURE OF THE FRG- USSR RELATIONSHIP AND WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR DAMAGE THE BREZHNEV VISIT COULD HAVE ON ALLIANCE COHESION IF BRANDT WERE EVEN PRIVATELY TO INDICATE READINESS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN THE CSCE CONTEXT. ALSO, BRANDT MUST REALIZE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPLICATIONS WHICH A SEEMINGLY TOO FORTHCOMING FRG POSITION TOWARD THE USSR MIGHT HAVE AT THIS JUNCTURE ON THE GERMAN PUBLIC. THERE ARE INCREASING INDICATIONS OF CONCERN AMONG SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION AND

GOVERNMENT THAT THE OSTPOLITIK VENTURES MAY HAVE LED
TO A WEAKENING OF THE FRG' S TIES WITH THE WEST AND THE
US IN PARTICULAR. HERE AGAIN, THEREFORE, THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT' S ROOM FOR MANEUVER WITH THE SOVIETS WOULD
APPEAR FAIRLY RESTRICTED.
HILLENBRAND

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** LIMDIS
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BONN05292
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730439/aaaaicst.tel
Line Count: 395
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, NOFORN
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 8
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, NOFORN
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <06-Sep-2001 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971218
Subject: FRG- USSR RELATIONS: THE BREZHNEV VISIT-- A PREVIEW
TAGS: PFOR, GW, UR
To: BELGRADE
BUCHAREST
BUDAPEST
EUR
MOSCOW
PRAGUE
SECSTATE WASHDC

SOFIA
WARSAW

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005